

Village seeking grants for Riverwalk extension



Brian Wegner of Mishicot runs along the Riverwalk Trail that follows the East Twin River in Village Park recently. Wegner and other residents will apply for grant funds to extend the trail. **Sue Pischke/HTR**

Application due May 1 for 50 percent funds match

BY KRISTOPHER WENN

Herald Times Reporter

MISHICOT — Brian Wegner said he typically finishes his daily runs at the Riverwalk trail in Mishicot Village Park.

"It's nice, because it's off the roads and streets," he said. "Every once in a while I'll see a blue heron or salmon running in the (East Twin) river."

Wegner, a Mishicot native who returned to the area after retiring as a U.S. Navy officer, is part of a group of residents seeking grant funding to extend the Riverwalk from its current 2,000-foot paved section.

The village is applying for grant funding from the state Department of Natural Resources.

Under the current proposal, the trail will be extended from the Mishicot Fire Station at state Highway 147, proceed east on the bank of the East Twin River until the Kruse subdivision, and then south to Willow Drive, according to Jim Bydalek, village clerk-treasurer.

Project managers are discussing if a steel bridge donated by Eis Structural Movers could be installed at the east end of the trail to cross the river to the south end of the Mishicot High School

property, he said.

Managers also are studying the possibility of extending the trail a second time from the covered bridge at Rockway Street, west along the banks of the East Twin River, to the bridge at county Highway B, he said.

The application for a grant, which would provide a 50 percent match, is due May 1. The village has raised \$31,964 for the project from revenue collected from room taxes at Fox Hills Resort in Mishicot, according to village officials.

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A view of the River Walk Trail that winds along the East Twin River and Village Park near South Main Street in Mishicot. **Sue Pischke/HTR**



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RIVERWALK

From A1

But a final project cost estimate will not be available until the application is completed in April, said Gary Sikich, community development specialist with Mead & Hunt, the firm hired for the project. The DNR likely will notify the village if it has received a grant by early July, according to Chris Halbur, DNR customer service regional supervisor.

If the village receives the grant, construction would begin in spring 2009, Sikich said.

Wegner said the village will seek volunteers to help with brush clearing and other trail work once the extension work begins.

The extension likely will be made with crushed limestone allowing travel for walkers,

runners, strollers and bikers but not for rollerbladers, said Bernie Samz, village president and chairman of the Riverwalk Committee.

"(With) crushed limestone ... you have a better base when it's time that we do go to black top," he said. "... it just compacts a lot better than woodchips."

The current trail is an 8-foot-wide paved pathway in Mishicot Village Park that snakes by the village's municipal dam and bridge and has signs identifying the various fish populations in the river, Bydalek said. The trail has decorative lighting and benches, he said.

"It's been very well received," he said of the trail. "It's used a lot, we plow it in the winter; we've installed lights on it so that we can really use it at night. It's very user-friendly."

Riverwalk developers wanted to create easier access to

the river for seniors, the handicapped and for young families to enjoy the river-front, said Kathy Lindsey, former Mishicot Main Street manager who worked on the project through its first phase.

According to the village's comprehensive plan, the trail would be extended to the village limits from Steiner's Corner to Vet's Park as funding becomes available. Another goal is to have the trail intersect with the Ice Age Trail and be part of a statewide park trail system.

The Riverwalk project began in 1999. In 2003, the village received a \$42,045 state stewardship grant from DNR for the current paved section of the trail. The paved section was completed in the same year.

*Kristopher Wenn: (920) 686-2132
or kwenn@htrnews.com*